

# Youth Protecting Wisconsin Waters

## The Department of Workforce Development Boat Inspection Initiative



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Wisconsin Lakes Convention

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# Wisconsin's AIS Goals

- Focus on containment of aquatic invasives (AIS)
- Strengthen local, county and state partnership
- Reduce spread of EWM, ZM, & SWF
- Contain VHS
- No new invasive species inland!



Enhance watercraft inspections!



# Clean Boats, Clean Waters



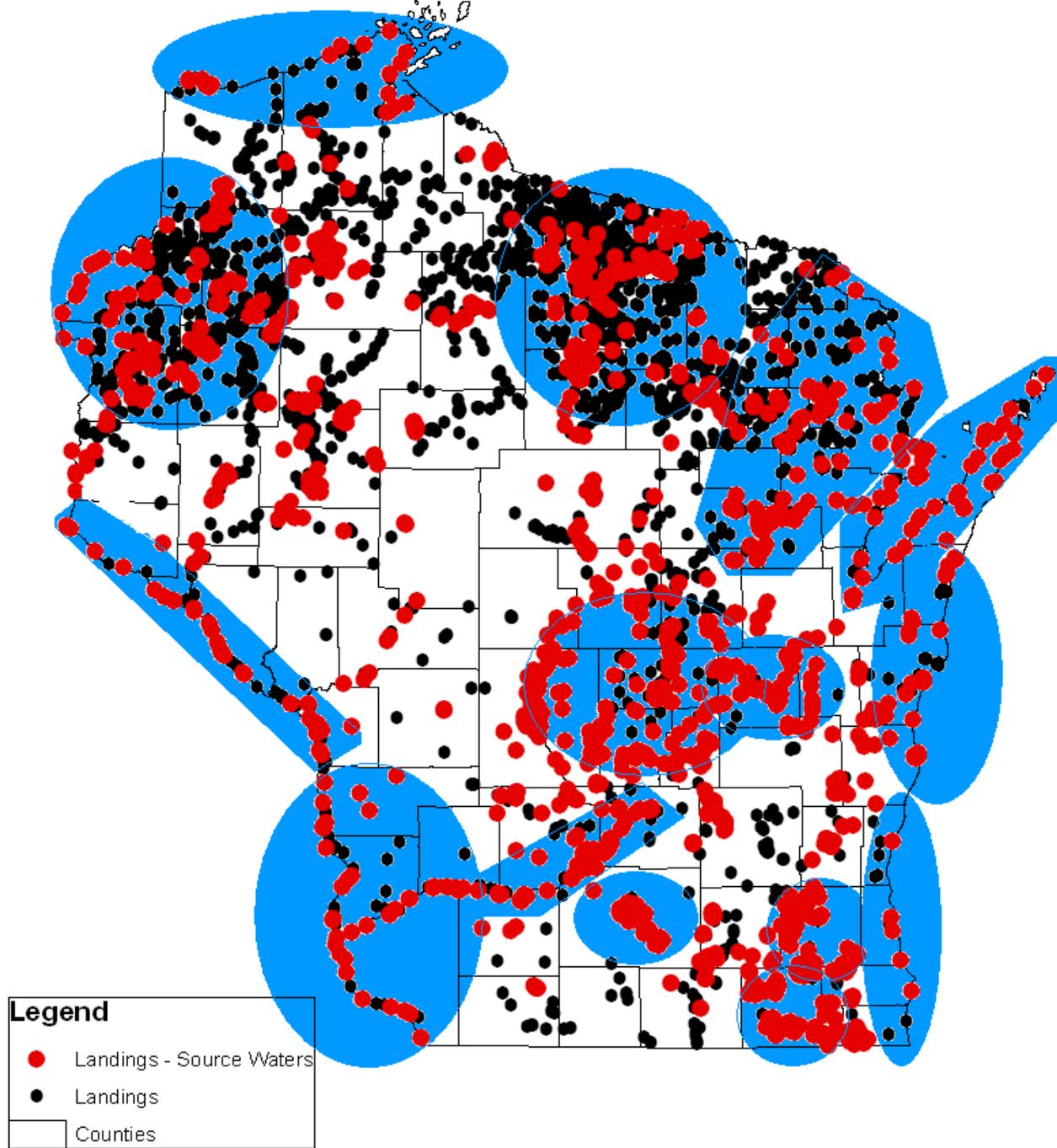
- Train volunteers & paid staff
- Inspector duties
  - Educate on AIS prevention
  - Help boaters **inspect** their equipment for plants & water
  - **Collect and report valuable data** about boater actions & awareness of AIS laws



# Inspection Goals

- In past, more focus on protecting lakes free from AIS
- Focusing on containing AIS to affected lakes may be more valuable – Notre Dame research
- **Get more inspectors on waters with AIS!**
  - Great Lakes
  - Winnebago
  - Mississippi River



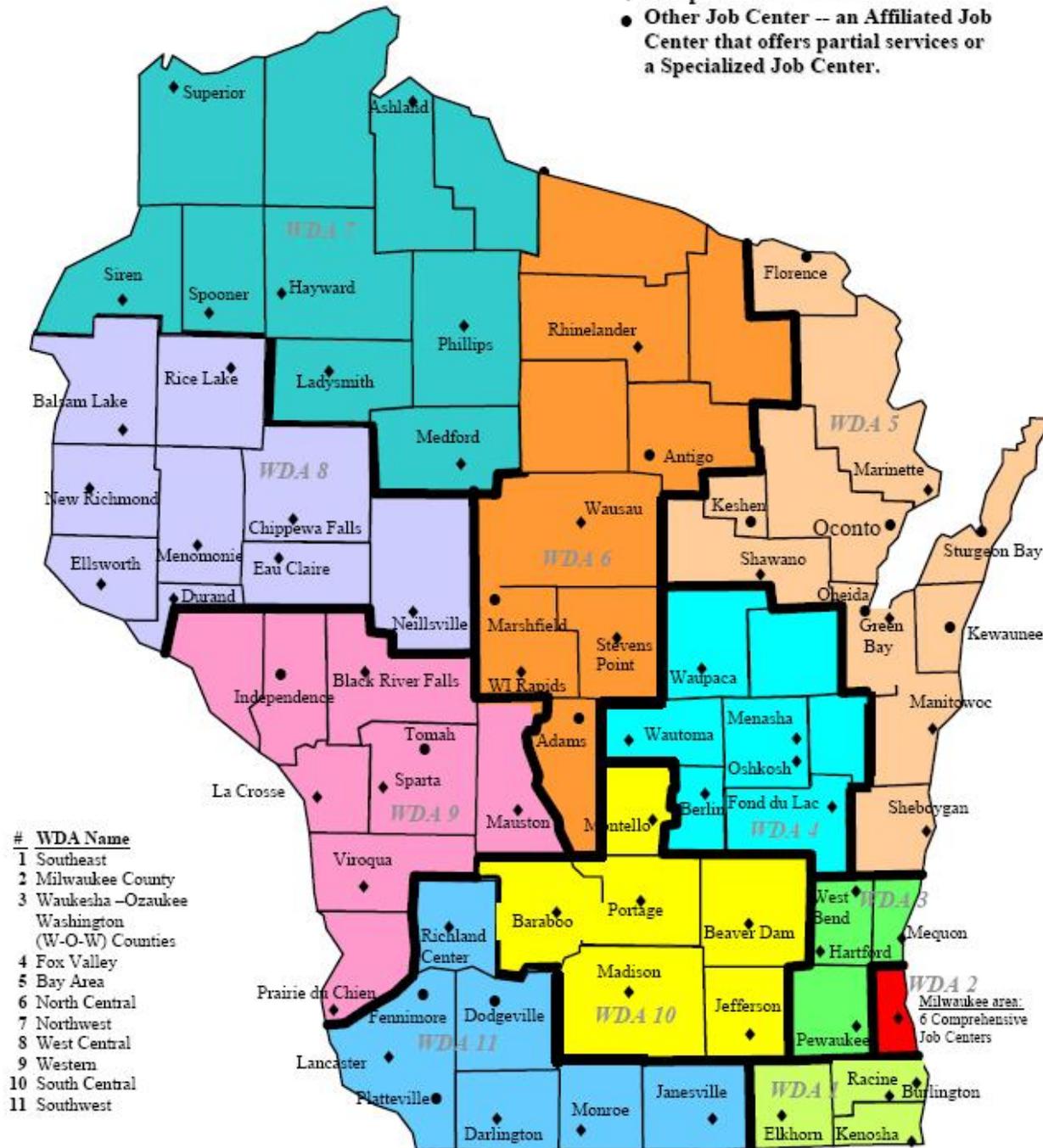


# New Partnerships

- Many partners engaged already – counties, non-profits, tribes, universities, federal agencies, etc.
- Department of Workforce Development & American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
  - DWD's Green Jobs program
  - ARRA funds
  - 11 Workforce Development Areas



- ◆ Comprehensive Job Center
- Other Job Center -- an Affiliated Job Center that offers partial services or a Specialized Job Center.



- # WDA Name
- 1 Southeast
  - 2 Milwaukee County
  - 3 Waukesha-Ozaukee Washington (W-O-W) Counties
  - 4 Fox Valley
  - 5 Bay Area
  - 6 North Central
  - 7 Northwest
  - 8 West Central
  - 9 Western
  - 10 South Central
  - 11 Southwest

WDA 2 Milwaukee area: 6 Comprehensive Job Centers

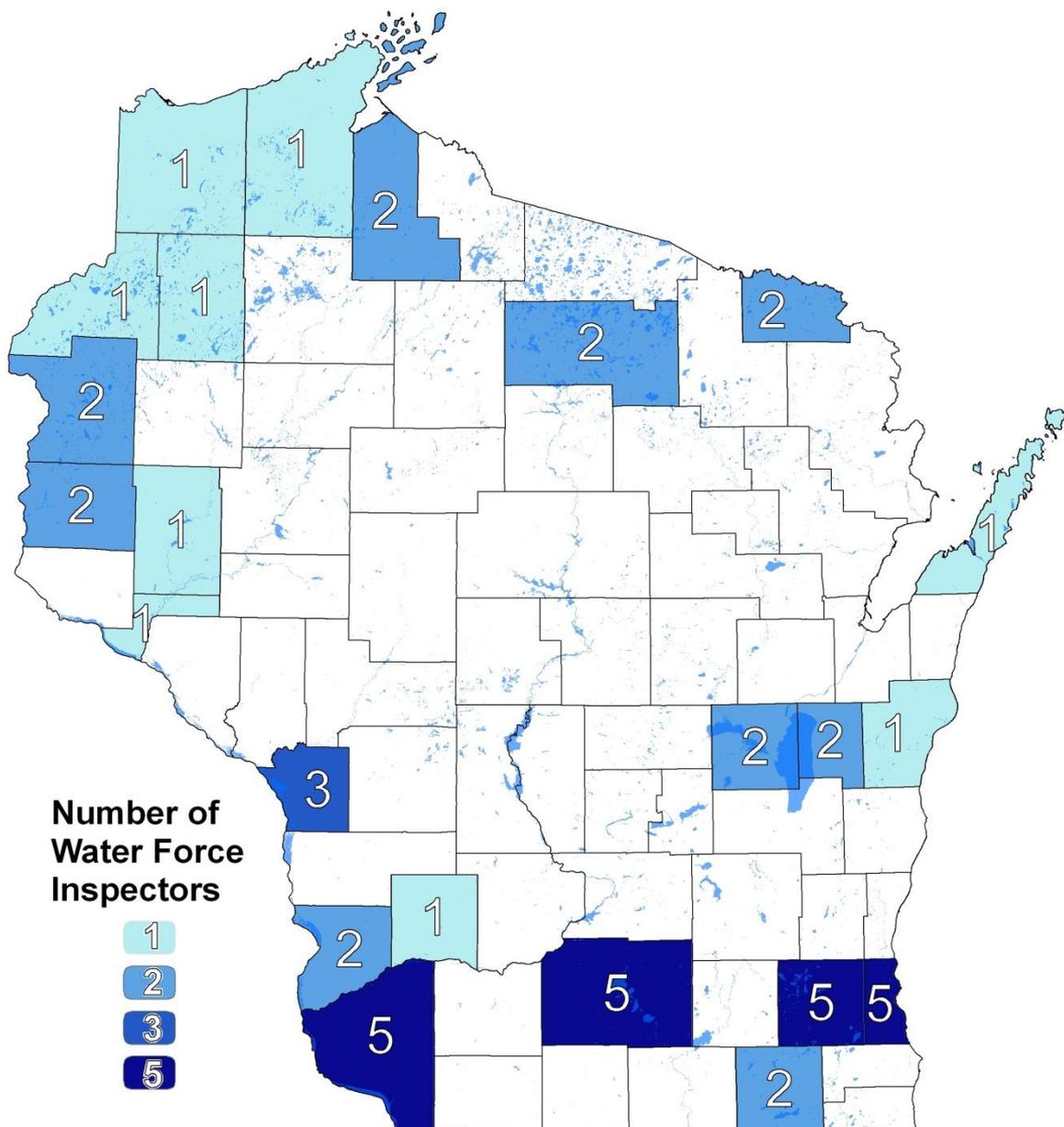
# Creation of the Water Force

- Goals:
  - protect WI lakes
  - provide work experience to young adults

**= The Water Force watercraft inspector project**

# Supportive Partners

- Exciting! Now...where do we start?
  - Supervision
  - Training & supplies
  - Mentorship
- 16 AIS partner organizations step up
  - Counties, non-profits, lake organizations, universities, & National Park Service
- 18 supervisors allowed for 50 Water Force inspectors in 23 counties



# Training

- 6 training sessions held for inspectors, June - Aug
  - Cable, Milwaukee, LaCrosse, Green Bay, & Madison
- Focused on:
  - AIS background
  - **AIS prevention steps & laws**
  - **Communicating** effectively
  - Conducting watercraft inspections & role playing
  - Data collecting & **reporting**
- Met supervisors/mentors



# Supplies

- Standard equipment for inspectors
  - CBCW t-shirts, apron, & hat
  - Inspector manual
  - Clipboard & data sheets
  - Disposable camera
  - Publications
- Plus...
  - Cell phone
  - AIS banner



# Summer Experiences

- All young adults gained experience
  - Educating citizens
  - Collecting data on form & entering data into SWIMS database
  - Interacting with other watercraft inspectors
- Some others also
  - Put up AIS signage at boat landings
  - Participated in AIS monitoring
  - Spoke to tour groups about AIS prevention
  - Presented about their experiences at statewide gathering of WDAs





**CLEAN BOATS  
CLEAN WATERS**

**CLEAN BOATS  
CLEAN WATERS**  
Working with boaters to protect our lakes.

**CLEAN BOATS  
CLEAN WATERS**  
Protect our lakes.

Yac Club

# Feedback from Water Force Inspectors

“We don’t want invasive species from other lakes getting in here. Most people who use Gilmore Lake are happy to see me here because they don’t want this lake to get messed up like some others. And, tourism is big in Washburn County. If the lakes get filled up with a bunch of junk—weeds and water life that doesn’t have natural predators—they’ll be unusable.”

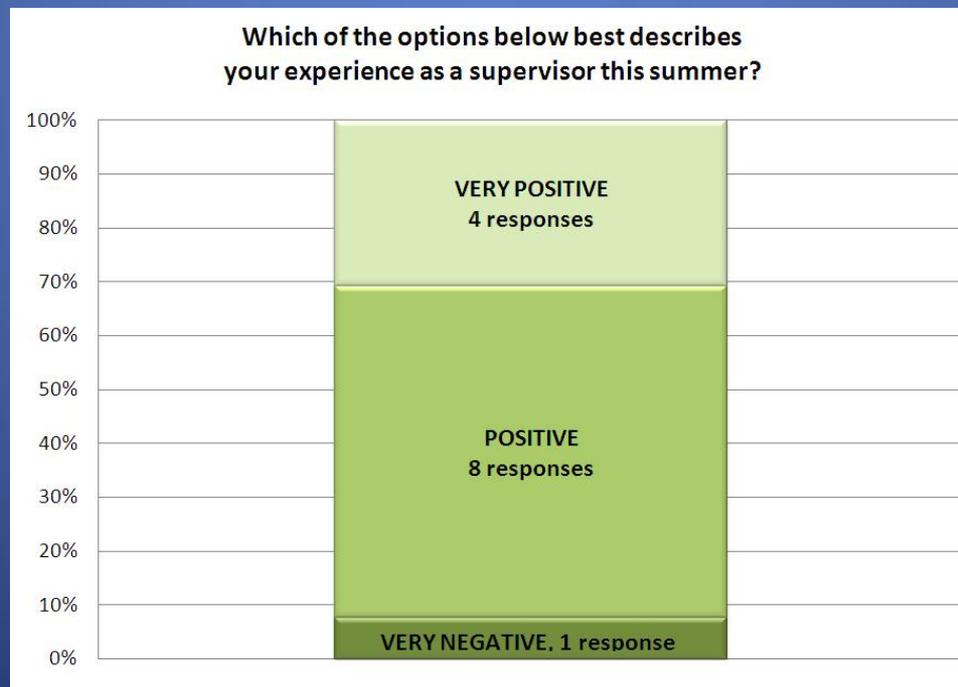
“I’m getting experience in the field I want to go into.”

# Feedback from Water Force Inspectors

“By working as a watercraft inspector I get to meet a lot of new and interesting people. It’s entertaining and inspirational to hear them talk about their outdoor experiences and how the lakes were several years ago, before they became host to AIS. The only downside of working as a watercraft inspector is meeting people who do not care about the welfare of the lakes. Their mindset is that we are just wasting our time and slowing down the inevitable. They believe that there is no point to what we are doing. Attitudes like this only serve to motivate me to work harder and reinforce my desire to inform as many people as possible.”

# Feedback from Supervisors

- Supervisor debriefing found majority
  - Had positive experiences working with their Water Force young adults
  - Felt partnering with their local WDA was beneficial
  - Would consider participating again



# Feedback from Supervisors

- Suggestions for improvement
  - Initiate project earlier
  - Include supervisors in hiring process & earlier in project
- Topics to emphasize at future trainings
  - Data entry & using SWIMS
  - Work expectations & ethics
  - How to communicate with supervisor

# Lessons Learned for Future Inspections

- With funding, Water Force a go
  - WDA 8 in West Central WI Green Academy
  - Perhaps not as widespread?
  - GLRI funds?
- Value in hiring inspectors for AIS-affected waters (Great Lakes, SW WI, etc.)
- Our AIS partners are an invaluable part of our program!

**Thank you to everyone who helped  
make this project possible!**

# Any Questions?



**Happy April  
Fools' Day!**